

# North West Trail Riders Association, INC.

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Wallowa-Whitman National Forest

In reference to the Sheep Creek Vegetation Management Project

The North West Trail Riders Association INC (NWTRA) is an enthusiast driven OHV Club that was established in 1985. Throughout our history we have dedicated our time to supporting the Winom-Frazier OHV Complex with our volunteer service time.

NWTRA was on the ground for the recovery of the 1996 Tower Fire and have utilized the area as the forest recovered. What we see in these areas is an incredible fuel load developing for a potentially huge fire event. Our club fully supports Wallowa-Whitman National Forest managing the fire danger in the Sheep Creek area.

The club's focus is on the OHV riding opportunities that exist now and what could be available in the future. This project has both commercial and non-commercial restoration efforts that are around a number of current trails in the area. Unfortunately the maps provided to the public have very limited information, specifically excluding the trail and secondary road numbers. NWTRA was invited to comment early on this project and does have an idea of the trails effected.

This area's trails mostly utilize older roads with small connectors. There is one exception, that is Sheep Creek Trail. This Single Track (Class III only) trail and is a very old legacy trail that is very rare in the area, let alone the complex. A non commercial restoration area, NWTRA wants to ensure this very rustic trail is maintained and not damaged during this needed restoration project.

The OHV proposal of this project is very interesting to the club. NWTRA is all about expanding fun family friendly riding opportunities. But, we do not want to a part of restricting access to other user groups. If a limited use road is planned to be closed through the legal process, NWTRA would rather have this same road be converted into a trail, to maintain some access, instead of none. NWTRA will not be a part of the forced closure of a road for OHV riders to have a trail.



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Within the Post Sale Management Plan NWTRA has some concerns:

- 5160-30 Looks to be a well-used road leading into the proposed Opportunities for Enhancement routes of the 5182-800. If even dead ended to the 5182-800, it will allow quick access to the 5160 for entry and safety.
- 5160-39 Just a tail on 5160-30, no issue
- 5160-50 NWTRA does not understand this closure in context with the Opportunities for Enhancement routes of 5160-012 thru 5160-045 as this closure would create a dead end of the "enhancement" route
- 5160-140 No issue
- 5175-020 This seems to be a well-used route. It would seem that leaving this open for more multiuse and closing the 5175-325 that is parallel to it makes more sense as limited use.
- 5178-000 Outside the complex, this road seems to provide access to a number of other open routes, which would then be cut off

Within the Opportunities for-Enhancement

- Recognizing the multiple routes in use for decades truly enhances the knowledge and safety of forests users and NWTRA is all for safe and responsible use
- The additional routes will assist in connecting the dead-end trail of Chicken Hill, through the recommendation of the 5182-035/040 and 5175-010/0800
- We have concerns about the recommended 5160-012 thru 580 proposal, expressed above.

In general, NWTRA likes the idea of the forest service pro-actively managing the fuels issues of the forest. The focus of the club is on OHV recreation and these are our specific concerns. NWTRA is a pro-access for everyone type of group as our creation is a result of the massive closure to access of the 1984 Wilderness Area. Safe Access for all is our focus.

Thank you for consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

North West Trail Riders Association, Inc Leadership 2020

